

Dear Jims,

8/12/75

Lane is never fit a loss for words. As long as they serve his immediate purpose he has new ones for new purposes.

He told Tom Shales about me, "It is a shame Harold doesn't fight the Warren Commission as hard as he fights other critics."

Even for Lane this is pretty good.

Sprague gave me a fine endorsement. He says I'm crazy.

I gather that most of those to whom he talked - and I don't know all - in one way or another described me as a mean old bastard.

Even these were, as I gather, unanimous in their comments on my work, as distinguished from my personality. Guess I'm making progress.

We discussed the nature of the story when I said I regretted that all the mass means of reaching people were copping out on the subject and going in for the old stuff about personalities when not one is in a position to know who is serious, who not; who dependable, who not; who no more than a ripper-off, etc. He said he hoped his would be the exception.

So do I.

I had told Shales the story about the first time I could take no more of Lane, when I'd given him a TV show and he stole my stuff to my face on my show. I then had no choice but to prove him a crook, which I did, on live TV. When we broke for a break he said that when the show was over he'd punch me in the nose. I asked him why wait? After the show we were together because there was no choice. Not knowing in advance the terrible kind of book Citizen's Dissent would be I'd arranged with a friend for her to interview Lane for a book and author show. I supplied her transportation and had to wait for her to finish the interview.

Shales asked Lane if he'd ever threatened to punch me in the nose. Instead of denying it Lane's response was "Harold's too old for me to punch."

The friend with the book-and-author show taped this TV one and I have the in-studio tape - with the backoff when I dared him to swing then. "Despite ages.

For fun,